



JC971 U.S. PTO
09/935104
08/22/01

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I, CASSANDRA RICHARDS, TEAM LEADER EXAMINATION SUPPORT AND SALES hereby certify that annexed is a true copy of the Provisional specification in connection with Application No. PQ 9587 for a patent by ARISTOCRAT TECHNOLOGIES AUSTRALIA PTY LTD filed on 22 August 2000.

WITNESS my hand this
Fourth day of July 2001

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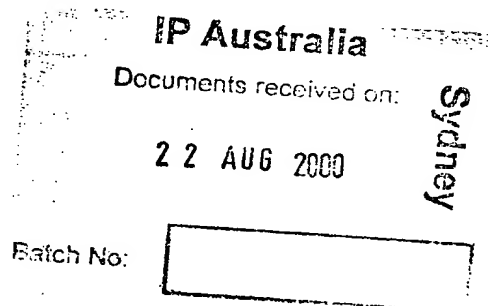
AUSTRALIA

Patents Act 1990

Aristocrat Technologies Australia Pty Ltd

PROVISIONAL SPECIFICATION

Invention Title:



Gaming Machine with Multi-scatter Game

The invention is described in the following statement:

Field of the Invention

This invention relates to a gaming machine. More particularly, the invention relates to a gaming machine and to an improvement to a game
5 played on such a gaming machine.

Background to the Invention

Players who regularly play gaming machines quickly tire of particular
10 games and therefore it is necessary for manufacturers of these machines to develop innovative game features which add interest to the games. In so doing, it is hoped to keep players amused and therefore willing to continue playing the games as well as to attract new players.

Also, with the growth that has occurred in the gaming machine market,
15 there is intense competition between manufacturers to supply various existing and new venues. When selecting a supplier of gaming machines, the operator of a venue will often pay close attention to the popularity of various games with their patrons. Therefore, gaming machine manufacturers are keen to devise games which are popular with the players as a mechanism for
20 improving sales, retaining customers and attracting new customers.

Summary of the Invention

According to the invention, there is provided a gaming machine having
25 a display means and a game control means arranged to control images displayed on the display means, the game control means being arranged to play a game wherein one or more random events are caused to be displayed on the display means and, if a predefined winning event occurs, the machine awards a prize, the gaming machine being characterized in that the display
30 means displays a plurality of spinning reels, each reel carrying a plurality of symbols thereon, one of the symbols being a scatter symbol and, in respect of at least one of the reels, more than one of the scatter symbols on said at least one reel being able to be displayed together when the reels are in a rest condition and, where applicable, all the displayed scatter symbols
35 contributing to a single paying combination of the scatter symbols.

It will be appreciated that to achieve a winning combination, a predetermined number of the symbols must be displayed. Normally, at least three symbols constitute a winning combination. Hence, the reference to "where applicable" above refers to the display of at least the minimum
 5 number of the symbols to constitute a winning combination.

Each of the reels may carry more than one scatter symbol. Preferably, each reel carries at least two scatter symbols thereon. The scatter symbols may be positioned on each reel such that up to two scatter symbols are able to be displayed together at any one time. Hence, for a five reel video
 10 simulation, a maximum of ten scatter symbols may be able to be displayed at once to constitute a ten of a kind winning combination.

Brief Description of the Drawings

15 The invention is now described by way of example with reference to the accompanying diagrammatic drawings in which:-

Figure 1 shows a three dimensional view of a gaming machine, in accordance with the invention;

Figure 2 shows a block diagram of a control circuit of the gaming
 20 machine;

Figure 3 shows a table of reel strips for a game to be played on the gaming machine of Figure 1;

Figure 4 shows a first example of a display screen of the game; and

Figure 5 shows a second example of a display screen of the game.
 25

Detailed Description of the Drawings

In Figure 1, reference numeral 10 generally designates a gaming machine, including a game, in accordance with the invention. The machine
 30 10 includes a console 12 having a video display unit 14 on which a game 16 is played, in use. The game 16 is a spinning reel game which simulates the rotation of a number of spinning reels 18.

A midtrim 20 of the machine 10 houses a bank 22 of buttons for enabling a player to play the game 16. The midtrim 20 also houses a credit
 35 input mechanism 24 including a coin input chute 24.1 and a bill collector 24.2.

The machine 10 includes a top box 26 on which artwork 28 is carried. The artwork 28 includes paytables, details of bonus awards, etc.

A coin tray 30 is mounted beneath the console 12 for cash payouts from the machine 10.

5 Referring now to Figure 2 of the drawings, a control means or control circuit 40 is illustrated. A program which implements the game and user interface is run on a processor 42 of the control circuit 40. The processor 42 forms part of a controller 44 which drives the screen of the video display unit 14 and which receives input signals from sensors 46. The sensors 46 include
10 sensors associated with the bank 22 of buttons and touch sensors mounted in the screen 16. The controller 44 also receives input pulses from the mechanism 24 indicating that a player has provided sufficient credit to commence playing. The mechanism 24 may, instead of the coin input chute 24.1 or the bill collector 24.2, or in addition thereto, be a credit card reader
15 (not shown) or any other type of validation device.

Finally, the controller 44 drives a payout mechanism 48 which, for example, may be a coin hopper for feeding coins to the coin tray 30 to pay a prize once a predetermined combination of symbols carried on the reels 18 appears on the screen 16 or some other prize winning event occurs.

20 As indicated above, the game 16 is a spinning reel game which simulates the rotation of a number of spinning reels 18. The controller 44 contains, in a memory (not shown), data relating to reel strips. Each position on the reel strip maps to a corresponding position on the reel 18 to be displayed. The controller 44 selects random locations of the reel strips
25 which map to the positions at which the reels 18 will stop.

As illustrated in Figure 3 of the drawings, each reel strip 50 contains two scatter symbols 52 thereon. The scatter symbols 52 are either arranged adjacent each other on the reel strips 50 or, as shown in respect of reel strips one and three, the scatter symbols are separated from each other by, at most,
30 one other standard symbol.

Consequently, it will be appreciated that it is possible for both scatter symbols 52 on each reel 18 to be visible at the same time on a display screen 54 (Figure 4) if the relevant reels 18 stop in the appropriate position.

Insofar as conventional, standard symbols on the reels 18 are
35 concerned, normally a minimum number of symbols, preferably three, is required in order for a winning combination to result. The symbols must

appear in a predetermined order on an active payline of the game. For example, most gaming machines pay for left-to-right winning combinations appearing on any active payline.

5 However, with scatter symbols, the appearance of a predetermined number of the scatter symbols, anywhere on the screen 16 results in a winning combination. In other words, scatter symbols need not appear on active paylines to be eligible to contribute to a winning combination.

10 Reel strips of spinning reel type games normally each only have a single scatter symbol or the symbols are laid out on the reel strips so that it is not possible to get more than one scatter symbol displayed in respect of that reel at the same time. Also, for cases where it may be possible to get more than one scatter symbol displayed on the same reel at any one time, each of the symbols on the same reel is regarded separately when determining winning combinations. For example, two scatter symbols on the same reel 15 will not constitute two scatters towards a single winning combination but rather two separate occurrences that may each contribute to separate paying winning combinations in respect of the scatter symbols. Hence, the maximum number of scatter symbols that can make up a single paying scatter combination will be equal to the number of reels of the spinning reel 20 game.

The reel strips 50 are set up in such a way so as to allow for two or more scatter symbols to be displayed in respect of the same reel 18 at the same time. When this occurs, each scatter symbol contributes to a single paying winning combination of scatter symbols.

25 In respect of the reel strips 50 illustrated in Figure 3 of the drawings it will, accordingly, be possible to obtain a winning combination of ten scatter symbols. It will, however, also be appreciated that it is feasible, in respect of a five reel game with a window of three symbols displayed per reel, to have up to fifteen of a kind winning combinations.

30 In the example of the game shown in Figure 4 of the drawings, it is assumed that the reels 18 stop at positions 5, 4, 16, 9 and 5 of the reel strips 50 to generate the display screen shown in Figure 4 of the drawings. This embodiment will pay a prize for five scatter symbols.

35 Assuming that the reels 18 stop at positions 5, 10, 6, 10, 6 of the reel strips 50, as shown in Figure 5, the maximum scatter prize of ten of a kind scatter symbols will be awarded.

It will be appreciated by persons skilled in the art that numerous variations and/or modifications may be made to the invention as shown in the specific embodiments without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention as broadly described. The present embodiments are, therefore, to
5 be considered in all respects as illustrative and not restrictive.

Dated this twenty-second day of August 2000

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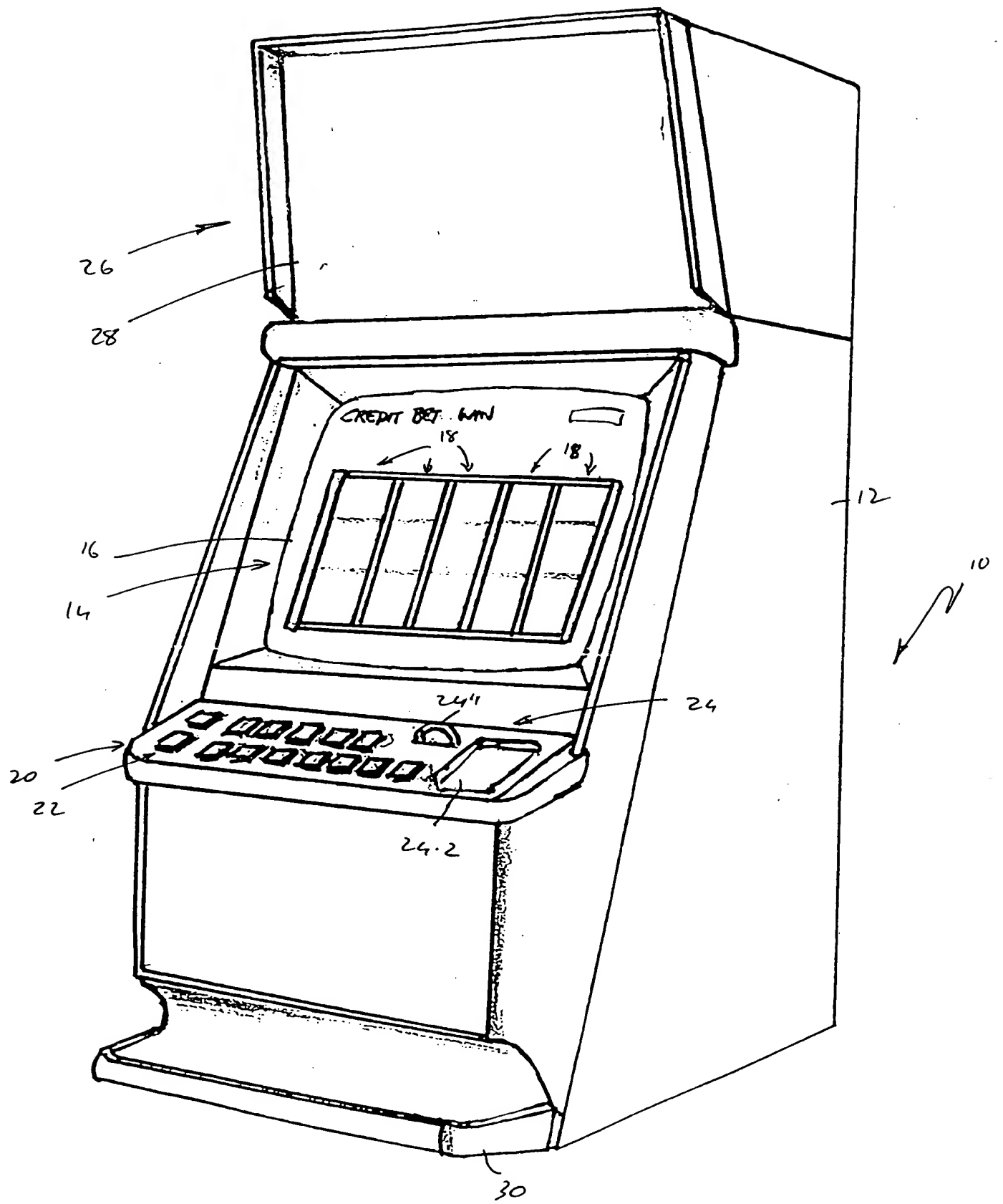


FIG. 1

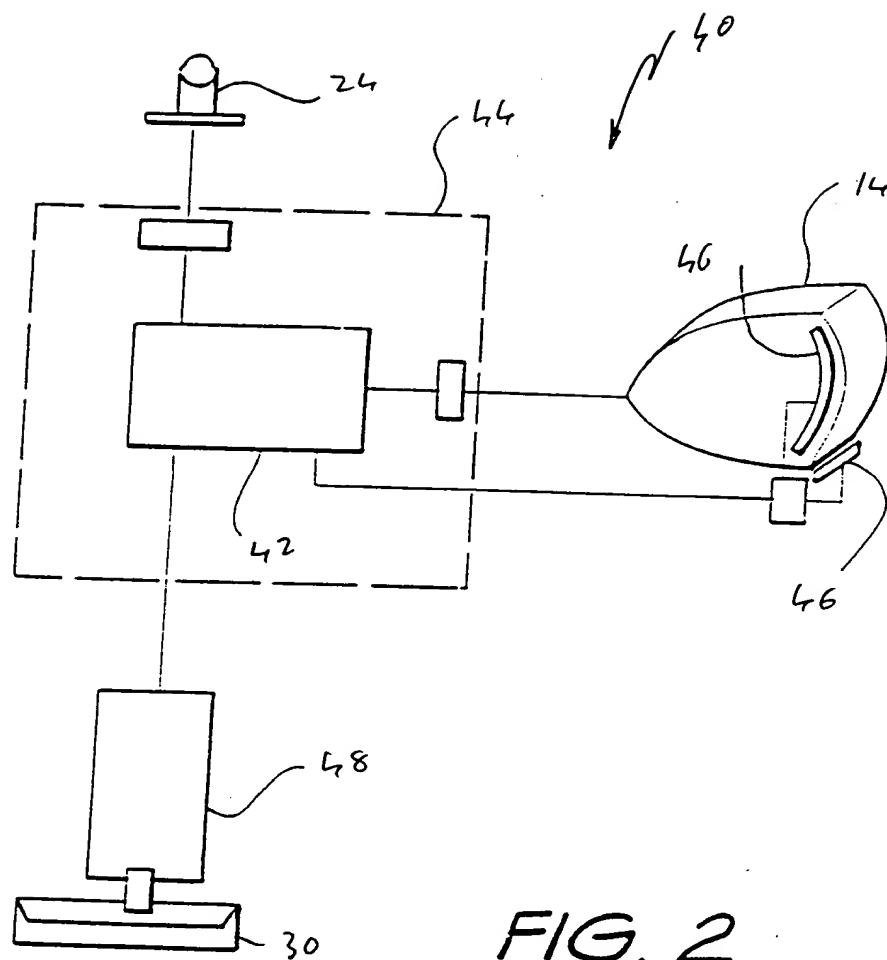


FIG. 2

50 50 50 50 50

Position	Reel 1	Reel 2	Reel 3	Reel 4	Reel 5
1	ACE	QUEEN	JACK	QUEEN	JACK
2	KING	ACE	SYM_B	KING	KING
3	JACK	TEN	ACE	TEN	SYM_A
4	SCATTER	KING	QUEEN	JACK	JACK
5	ACE	QUEEN	SCATTER	KING	SCATTER
6	SCATTER	JACK	JACK	TEN	SCATTER
7	QUEEN	SYM_A	SCATTER	SYM_B	QUEEN
8	JACK	TEN	ACE	QUEEN	ACE
9	ACE	KING	KING	KING	KING
10	QUEEN	SCATTER	TEN	SCATTER	QUEEN
11	JACK	SCATTER	ACE	SCATTER	TEN
12	TEN	TEN	JACK	ACE	SYM_B
13	SYM_A	KING	KING	TEN	TEN
14	JACK	JACK	SYM_A	SYM_A	ACE
15	QUEEN	SYM_B	TEN	TEN	QUEEN
16	SYM_B	QUEEN	ACE	ACE	SYM_C
17	JACK	KING	KING	TEN	TEN
18	TEN	SYM_C	TEN	SYM_C	JACK
19	SYM_C	QUEEN	SYM_C	KING	KING
20	QUEEN	JACK	TEN	TEN	TEN

52 52 52

FIG. 3

54

2—	S	10	10	Q	J	—2
52	A	K	A	K	S	—1
3—	S	Q	K	S	S	—3

52 52 52

FIG. 4

54

2—	S	K	S	K	S	—2
52	A	S	J	S	S	—1
3—	S	S	S	S	Q	—3

52 52 52

FIG. 5